



How it all Started

جب تیرے رب نے فرشتوں سے کہا کہ میں مٹی سے ایک انسان پیدا کرنے والا ہوں
 سو جب میں اس کی تکمیل کر دوں اور اپنی روح اس میں پھونکوں
 تو اس کے لیے فرمانبرداری کرتے ہوئے گر جاؤ۔
 تو سب فرشتوں کُل کے کُل نے فرمانبرداری کی۔
 مگر ابلیس نے نہ کی، اس نے تکبر کیا اور وہ کافروں
 میں سے تھا۔
 کہا، اے ابلیس کس چیز نے تجھے روکا کہ تو اس کی فرمانبرداری
 کرتا جسے میں نے اپنے دونوں ہاتھوں سے پیدا کیا ہے، کیا تو نے تکبر کیا تو
 عالی مرتبہ لوگوں میں سے ہے
 اس نے کہا، میں اس سے بہتر ہوں۔ تو نے مجھے آگ سے
 پیدا کیا ہے اور اسے مٹی سے پیدا کیا۔
 کہا تو اس (حالت) سے نکل جا، کیونکہ تو دُور کیا گیا ہے۔
 اور تجھ پر میری لعنت قیامت کے دن تک ہے۔

إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلٰئِكَةِ اِنِّيْ خَالِقٌ
 بَشَرًا مِّنْ طِيْنٍ ﴿٧١﴾
 فَاِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيْهِ مِنْ
 رُّوْحِيْ فَقَعُوْا لَهٗ سٰجِدِيْنَ ﴿٧٢﴾
 فَسَجَدَ الْمَلٰئِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ اٰجَعُوْنَ ﴿٧٣﴾
 اِلَّا اِبْلِيْسَ اِسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ
 مِنَ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿٧٤﴾
 قَالَ يَا اِبْلِيْسُ مَا مَنَعَكَ اَنْ تَسْجُدَ
 لِمَا خَلَقْتُ بِیَدَيَّ اَسْتَكْبَرْتَ
 اَمْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْعٰلِيْنَ ﴿٧٥﴾
 قَالَ اَنَا خَيْرٌ مِّنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِيْ مِنْ
 نَّارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ طِيْنٍ ﴿٧٦﴾
 قَالَ فَاخْرِجْ مِنْهَا فَاِنَّكَ رٰحِيْمٌ ﴿٧٧﴾
 وَاِنَّ عَلَيْكَ لَعْنَتِيْ اِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّيْنِ ﴿٧٨﴾

When thy Lord said to the angels: Surely I am going to create a mortal from dust. So when I have made him complete and breathed into him of My spirit, fall down submitting to him. And the angels submitted, all of them, But not Iblis. He was proud and he was one of the disbelievers. He said: O Iblis, what prevented thee from submitting to him whom I created with both My hands? Art thou proud or art thou of the exalted ones? He said: I am better than he; Thou hast created me of fire, and him Thou didst create of dust. He said: Go forth from hence! Surely thou art driven away: And surely My curse is on thee to the day of Judgment. [English/Urdu Translation by Hazrat Maulana Mohammed Ali]

As it approaches its conclusion, the Surah tells us how the human story first began and what happened on high. This defines its course as well as its fate and destination. Muhammad, *peace on him*, was sent at the end of time to warn people of all this: **“Your Lord said to the angels: I am about to create a human being out of clay; when I have fashioned him and breathed of My spirit into him, kneel down before him in prostration.”**

We do not know how God said this to the angels or how He speaks to them. Nor do we know how the angels receive what God imparts to them. We do not know anything of the angels’ nature except what God has told us about them in His revealed book. Therefore, it is useless to try to delve further into this. We should instead consider the significance of the story as told in the Qur’an.

God created man out of clay, just like the rest of living things on earth. All the elements in their constitutions are derived from clay, with the exception of the secret of life, about which we do not know how or where it came from. Apart from this secret and the breathing of a soul into man, all the constituents of his body stem from mother earth. He will be transformed again into these constituents when the unknown secret departs from his body together with the effects of the sublime breath of soul which defined his course in life.

Again we do not know the nature of the sublime breathing of a soul into man, but we know its effects which distinguished man from the rest of creation on earth. It distinguished him with the quality of aspiring to the sublime, with mind and spirit, which allowed him to look at past experiences and make future plans, and facilitated his spirit to go beyond what is received by his senses and understood by his mind to reach to what neither the senses nor the mind can comprehend. This quality of aspiring to the sublime is unique to man, shared by no other living creature on earth. It never happened in the long history of the earth that any species, or any individual from any species, made this leap even when we accept that physical evolution occurs.

God breathed of His soul into man because His will wished to place him in charge of the earth, managing its affairs within the limits He set, so that he would build human life on it. God gave man the ability to gain higher knowledge. Ever since, man has risen higher whenever he is in contact with the source of his soul, deriving his values from there and maintaining a straight course. When he deviates from this source, the knowledge within him will be in discordance, unable to follow a coherent,

progressive, and forward movement. In fact, these discordant trends will threaten his course and may lead to a setback in his human quality, pulling him down, even though his scientific knowledge and experience in some areas at least are well advanced.

This creature of small stature, limited ability, short life duration and basic knowledge could not have attained such honor except for this aspect of divine grace bestowed on him. Otherwise, what is man? He is this small, weak creature living on earth alongside millions of other species. The earth is only a small satellite of a mere star of which there are millions and millions in the great space whose boundaries are known only to God. Who is this creature, man, before whom the angels are required to prostrate? It is because of this subtle, yet great secret that man deserves his position of honor. When this is discarded, man goes back to his origin, the clay of the earth.

The angels acted on God's orders, as they naturally do: **"The angels prostrated themselves, all of them together."** How, when and where? All this is part of God's knowledge. To know does not add significance to the story. Instead, the significance is seen in the position and value given to man, a creature made of clay, when he rose above his origin through this breath of God's soul. The angels prostrated themselves in compliance with God's order, knowing that His wisdom is infinite.

"Not so Iblis. He gloried in his arrogance and was one of those who reject the truth." Was Iblis one of the angels? Most probably not, because if he were an angel, he would not have disobeyed God. Angels do not disobey any order issued to them by God, and they always do what they are bidden. It is mentioned in the Qur'an that he was created of fire, while it is known that the angels were created from light. Yet he was with the angels and the order to prostrate before Adam included him. He is not specifically mentioned in connection with the order so as to battle his position. Yet we know that the order applied to him because of the reproach he received as a result of his disobedience.

"Said (God): Iblis! What prevents you from bowing down to one whom I have created with My hands? Are you too proud, or do you deem yourself superior?" God is the Creator of all. Therefore, the mention that He has created man is particularly significant because it refers to the special care given to this creature that has been given a breath of His soul. Are you too proud to obey My orders? Or do you deem yourself superior like all others who refuse to submit?

"Answered (Iblis): I am better than he: You have created me out of fire, but created him from clay." The answer overflows with envy. It also ignores the noble element that Adam has in addition to his creation from clay. Thus, it is a rude retort stemming from a nature that had abandoned all goodness.

At this point, the divine order was issued expelling this rebellious creature: **"Said He: Then get out from it: you are accursed; My rejection shall follow you until the Day of Judgement."**

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ

JOYS and SORROWS of PARENTHOOD

Life of Prophet Muhammad {Peace and Blessings of Allah on him}

The first marriage of Prophet Muhammad, *peace on him*, gave him six children. The first was a boy, named **Al Qasim**. While most human societies, past and present, give preference to male offspring, the pre-Islamic Arabian society surpassed all others in this regard.

It was not uncommon for a father to bury a daughter alive, for fear of poverty or shame. To the Arabs at the time, a woman could neither earn her living nor fight in a tribal war. Thus she was a burden to be got rid of. A man with no male offspring was considered to be highly unfortunate because he would be forgotten soon after his death. He had no sons to bear his name.

As we know, Muhammad's (*peace on him*) marriage took place 15 years before he became God's Prophet and Messenger. His was a happy marriage and both he and his wife were very delighted to have a boy for their first child. Muhammad, *peace on him*, was a very caring husband and a father who doted on his children. Moreover, he did not share the Arabian view of female offspring. While an Arab would receive the birth of a daughter with much gloom and would be greatly depressed by the news, Muhammad, *peace on him*, felt that a daughter could be the source of great joy and happiness. Therefore, when Khadijah, his wife, gave birth to a daughter, he felt overjoyed. He gave her the name **Zainab, which meant "her father's adornment."** This was an implicit response to the Arabian gloomy reception of baby girls.

Yet the joy of having both son and daughter together did not last long. Tragedy was to strike shortly afterward. **Al Qasim died** before he reached two years of age. This caused Muhammad, *peace on him*, much sorrow, but infant mortality was a frequent occurrence in all societies at the time.

Khadijah was still in her prime, and she was to give her husband four more children: three daughters and a son. It never occurred to Muhammad, *peace on him*, that having daughters was anything but a blessing. While his society would consider him greatly unfortunate to have four daughters, he had no such feelings. On the contrary, he loved his daughters better than most Arabs would love their sons. He doted on them and ensured that they received the best upbringing he could give them. Their mother was a wise woman, and she was certain to make their life a comfortable one.

His second son was called **Abdullah**, but **nicknamed Al-Tahir** (i.e. the pure). Yet this second son of the Prophet did not live long either. He died very young, perhaps not getting beyond his first birthday. His daughters lived until they were married. Three of them had children. However, only one of them, **Fatimah**, survived the Prophet. The other three, **Zainab, Ruqayyah and Umm Kulthoom** died before him.

The Prophet, *peace on him*, had no children by any of his wives, although three of them had children by earlier marriages. However, he had one more

son born to him late in his life by Maria, the Coptic slave sent to him as a gift by Al-Muqawqis, the ruler of Egypt. He named that son **Ibrahim**, which is the Arabic form of Abraham. Again, Ibrahim lived only 18 months.

Thus, the Prophet, *peace on him*, who was a most loving and caring father, experienced the death of six of his seven children. Fatimah, who survived him, died six months after he had passed away.

إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِحَيَّتِنَا وَمَيِّتِنَا وَشَاهِدِنَا وَغَائِبِنَا
وَصَغِيرِنَا وَكَبِيرِنَا وَذَكَرْنَا وَأَنْشَأْنَا اللَّهُمَّ مَنْ
أَحْيَيْتَهُ مِنَّا فَأَحْيِهِ عَلَى الْإِسْلَامِ وَمَنْ
تَوَفَّيْتَهُ مِنَّا فَتَوَفَّهُ عَلَى الْإِيمَانِ ۝



INNOVATIONS OR BID'AH “DEVIATION IN MATTERS OF RELIGION”



Q: *What we eat, drink and the clothes we use were not known at the Prophet's time. Does that mean that these are Bid'ah? May I also mention that when Omar arranged that the Taraweeh prayer be offered in congregation, he commented that it was a good bid'ah. On this base, many Imams and scholars are using the same term to introduce new things in prayer, Zikar and other practices. Your comments.*

A: The term 'Bid'ah' is derived from a root Bada'a, which means "to invent, produce something new, etc." In its linguistic usage, the word carries proper and commendable connotations. From the same root, the term 'Badee" is derived, which means "1) fine, excellent, and 2) originator." When it is applied to God, it means the latter or "creator." Thus God describes Himself in the Qur'an as Badee' Al Samawat wal-Ard, which means "the Creator of the heavens and the earth."

The Prophet, *peace on him*, speaks about bid'ah and distinguishes between what is good and what is bad. But he makes clear that this applies to areas where God wants us to follow a certain line. Where no specific guidance is given, we have complete freedom of choice. The examples you have given provide a good basis. The Prophet, *peace on him*, has not specified guidance on food and clothes, except to point out what is forbidden in either. This means that whatever we choose is perfectly acceptable as long as we remain within the values and morality outlined by Islam. Some people may think that it is a Sunnah to imitate the way the Prophet, *peace on him*, used to dress. But the Prophet, *peace on him*, used the clothes his people used, without introducing anything new. There was no difference between the unbelievers and the Muslims in the way they dressed, except where something is forbidden in Islam. Thus, no Muslim would wear a robe made of silk, or one, which reveals the area that must be covered.

Normally people eat and dress what is suitable for their environment and climate. This is perfectly acceptable. No bid'ah applies here, because the Prophet, *peace on him*, did not state anything to prevent this. Nor did he recommend certain types of clothes saying that they were the ones to be used by Muslims throughout the world and in all generations.

Where bid'ah clearly applies is in matters of worship. It is here that the word acquires negative connotations. Generally speaking, the word is translated as "innovation", but the English word has positive connotations, while the Arabic word has no such sense. Hence, it is better to translate it as "deviation." The Prophet, *peace on him*, has given us a complete package of worship that admits no change or modifications. Hence, nothing can be added to Islamic worship, or it will be a deviation or bid'ah. In this area, there is no such a thing as good bid'ah.

But, people often quote Omar's action and his words. These have to be put in context. The Prophet, *peace on him*, first offered the Taraweeh prayer in congregation. He offered in the first night with a number of his companions. On the second night, there was a much larger group of them and they offered it together with the Prophet, *peace on him*, leading the prayer. The third night, before coming out of his home he looked at the people gathering in the mosque for this prayer and he found the mosque full with hardly any room left for any newcomer. He did not come out for it. When he was asked later why he remained at home, he said: "I feared lest that this prayer should become obligatory for you."

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

He it is Who has revealed the Book to thee; some of its verses are decisive — they are the basis of the Book — and others are allegorical. Then those in whose hearts is perversity follow the part of it which is allegorical, seeking to mislead, and seeking to give it (their own) interpretation. And none knows its interpretation save Allah, and those firmly rooted in knowledge. They say: We believe in it, it is all from our Lord. And none mind except men of understanding. [3:7]

During his reign, Omar went out at night to find out how people were faring, as was his habit. He noticed that there were many people in the mosque, but there were several congregational prayers in progress at the same time. He did not like what he saw because it gave an impression of disunity in the Muslim community. He interfered to make all these groups join one congregation, led by Ubayy ibn Ka'ab, a companion of the Prophet, who was famous for his perfect recitation of the Qur'an. The next night, when Omar went to the mosque he found that all people were in one congregation. He commented saying: "This is a good bid'ah."

From all this we realize that Omar did not introduce anything new. Nor did he initiate something that was not done before. It was the Prophet, *peace on him*, who in practice recommended that night worship in Ramadan, which is known as Taraweeh, be offered in congregation. When he absented himself from it later, this was for a specific reason. Then Omar brought it back to what was done by the Prophet, *peace on him*. Thus his bid'ah was to go back to the right practice. This was certainly good.

To use his comments to justify something we invent is to quote it out of context. There can simply be no good bid'ah in matters of worship. **No one has ever been a more devoted worshipper of God than the Muhammad, *peace on him*. If he did not do a particular act of worship, then it is not part of Islamic worship and can never be so. Anything new is a bid'ah, or deviation, and deviation can never be good.**

Q: Could you please explain the concept of Bid'ah, and what it means from the Islamic point of view?

A: As explained in answer above, most people translate bid'ah as innovation, which from Islamic point of view is wrong, as it seeks to invent some new practice or beliefs that the Prophet, *peace on him*, has not sanctioned. But the English word "innovation" carries good connotations, which are at variance with the Islamic concept. Hence, it is better to translate it as "deviation". This is a more accurate rendering of the Islamic meaning of the word.

When we speak about the principles of faith and proper values, or about Islamic worship, then we have to remember that God has made the religion of Islam perfect. He clearly states this in the Qur'an, as He says:

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالْدَّمُ وَلَحْمُ الْخَنزِيرِ وَمَا أُهْلَ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ وَالْمُنْخَنِقَةُ وَالْمَوْقُوذَةُ وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ
وَالنَّطِيحَةُ وَمَا أَكَلَ السَّبْعُ إِلَّا مَا ذَكَّيْتُمْ وَمَا ذَبَحَ عَلَى النَّصَبِ وَأَنْ تَسْتَفْسِمُوا بِالْأَزْلَامِ ذَلِكَ فِسْقٌ الْيَوْمَ
يَبْسُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِ الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَنَّمَتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي
وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ فِي مَخْمَصَةٍ غَيْرِ مُتَجَانِفٍ لِإِثْمٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

“This day I have perfected your religion for you”

Man cannot make more perfect what God has perfected. Thus, any increase or decrease in acts of worship, or the types of worship we offer, is a deviation. Any status given to any human being, without relying on the Qur'an or the Hadith, is a deviation. Any belief or ideas or concepts that have not been stated or explained in the Qur'an or the Sunnah is a deviation.

To give some examples: The Prophet, *peace on him*, says that travel may be made to visit only three mosques: the Haram in Makkah, the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah and the Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. To add any mosque anywhere in the world and say that visiting it is in itself an act of worship or that it is recommended, or brings this or that reward, is deviation. The Prophet, *peace on him*, stated what Sunnah prayers we may offer, some of which he specified in number of rak'ahs, while some he has left for our choice, as in the case of night worship. To add to the specified ones is deviation. To believe that visiting the grave of some historical figure, devout as he might have been in his life, benefits us with reward from God, or with answering our prayers, or healing our illness, or fulfilling our wishes, is deviation.

All such deviation comes under the Islamic term Bid'ah, and it should be shunned.

Q: In our country, after Friday prayer, most people stand up and start saying greetings to the Prophet, such as 'Ya Nabi Salam Alaik; Ya Rasool Salam Alaik. Is this acceptable? Can we offer prayers behind the imam who also engages in such rituals?

A: This sort of ritual is a deviation. It must not be done. If people do it thinking that this is part of the prayer, or that the prayer becomes better with it, then they are adding to the prayer and their addition is not only wrong, it is forbidden. If they claim that it is correct because someone told them so, then they consider that such a person has the authority to add to Islamic worship, and this is a form of associating partners with Allah.

On the other hand, if they do it by force of habit, knowing that it is not part of the prayer, and that the prayer is complete without it, their action is merely an innovation, or bid'ah, which must be discontinued.

The Imam has to be informed so that he could teach the people the proper attitude. If he does not stop insisting that it is 'all appropriate', then it is better not to join him in prayer. Asking dead people to

intercede with God for any reason is a form of associating partners with God. This is strictly forbidden. Not only so, but it takes the person who does it out of the fold of Islam altogether.

Q: In my country, there are many people who do not follow Islam or fulfill its major duties, such as prayers etc. Instead, they attend graveyards and visit tombs of some religious personalities, asking for their help. They do not miss performing 'Fatihah' every month, on the first Thursday of the new moon. How will this type of people be treated by Allah on the Day of Judgement?

A: We cannot say how Allah will deal with anybody on the Day of Judgement. He will administer His absolute justice to all. He knows the special circumstances, the intentions, the motives and the objectives of everyone. He values every action by every individual in the fairest of manners. What we can do, however, is to judge people's actions as they appear to us in the light of divine guidance provided by Allah in the Qur'an and in the light of the Sunnah of the Prophet, *peace on him*. That should give us a very good idea whether a certain kind of action is acceptable or not.

The first thing to say about such people is that they do not attend regularly to their most essential Islamic duties, such as prayers. The Prophet, *peace on him*, describes prayers as the mainstay of the Islamic faith. He explains that by adding: **"He who attends to it [i.e. prayer] provides his faith with strongest support, while he who neglects it, allows his faith to collapse."** Moreover, a person who neglects his prayer is more likely to neglect his other Islamic duties. It is a fact of life that a person who does not attend to his prayer is also not likely to have much reward from Allah. There will be little to his credit on the Day of Judgement.

Yet, these people try to satisfy their natural desire to be religious by resorting to practices that give them such an appearance. They visit the graves and tombs of those whom they consider saints. Because they give those **dead** people such status, they imagine that they have special privileges and powers. It may be true that the dead people whose graves they visit were of high religious standing and it may be true that they have been given certain privileges by Allah, but they are not of the type which enables them to respond to the requests of those who visit their graves. **No dead person can be of any benefit to the living.** Allah has not given anyone that power. Indeed, a dead person can be of no benefit even to himself. The Prophet, *peace on him*, tells us that **"when a human being dies, his actions come to an absolute end, except in one of three ways: A continuing act of charity, a useful contribution to knowledge or a dutiful child who prays for him."** In other words, the living can be of benefit to the dead by praying Allah on his behalf, but the dead cannot be of benefit to the living. When those people, whom you have described, go to such graves in order to request the dead to help them, they engage in futile action. Moreover, they are indeed guilty of the worst type of sin, namely, associating partners with Allah. Their practice can only be described as "worshipping graves".

The "Fatihah" is a certain type of ritual when people gather to engage in reading certain verses of the Qur'an and certain phrases of glorification of Allah thousands of times. This is coupled with other rituals such as preparation of food which is placed at a particular point before starting and then eaten after the whole ritual is over. All this has no basis whatsoever. It cannot be supported by any Hadith or Qur'anic verse. As such, it is an innovation [deviation], which is totally unacceptable. The Prophet, *peace on him*, says: **"Beware of newly invented matters. For every invented matter is an innovation [deviation] and every invented matter is going astray and every [person] going astray is in hell fire."** (Abu Dawood/Al Tirmithi) The Prophet, *peace on him*, also says: **"He who innovates something in this matter of ours that is not of it will have it rejected."**

When people engage in such practices, neglecting their duties, they actually try to give their lives a religious aspect. However, they err because they do not see the Prophet's guidance. Indeed, when it is

pointed out to them that their practices are wrong, they are not prepared to listen to sound advice. They feel that actions are good because they have seen some people, whom they consider guides, do them. They err in not seeking the guidance provided by Muhammad, *peace on him*, who was sent by Allah to convey His message. Their actions are of no value, because they do not give them any religious conscience. Their effect is only to give them a feeling that they have discharged what religion expects of them. Our religion is not a set of rituals. It is a constitution and a way of living. It has a very clear code of practice. Unless it is approached in the manner taught to us by the Prophet, it does not yield its fruit.

If we want to be true Muslims, we have to follow the Prophet's guidance. That means discharging our duties and not adding to the faith of Islam anything that is not part of it. Unfortunately, such practices are widespread in large areas of the Muslim world. They are responsible for the backwardness of Muslims everywhere. Muslims will not regain their strength and proper status until they disown such practices and regain their Islamic sense. That sense will guide them along the path set out for us by Muhammad, Allah's last messenger, peace and blessings of Allah on him.

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ

Our Lord, make not our hearts to deviate after Thou hast guided us and grant us mercy from Thee; surely Thou art the most liberal Giver.

How to Stop BINGE EATING

Binge eating means eating a large amount of food really quickly when you are not hungry. Binge eaters often carry on eating past the stage of feeling full. Binge eaters usually have certain favorite foods that they start eating, very often in secret, and cannot stop eating until all these items are gone. There are warning signs that you may be a binge eater and that you need to start to tackle the problem:

- You hide secret supplies of food that you like to eat and then you eat them in secret when no one else is around.
- You think about food all the time and everything revolves around food.
- When you have a problem at work, you go home and sit and over-eat on your favorite binge foods such as chips, ice cream, cakes, bread or chocolate.

Alva Carpenter

- You are eating even when you do not feel hungry and you keep eating even when you feel full.
- If you do give up these foods that you regularly binge eat, you get withdrawal symptoms.

If you know that you do at least three of the above then you have fallen into a pattern that needs to change, otherwise you will put on weight, and possibly damage your health and your self-esteem.

What happens when your binge eating is over is that you end up feeling very full and guilty and cross with yourself.

Many people eat for reasons other than hunger. They eat to feel better. We all do this to a degree but if you are regularly eating large amounts of food and then feel over-full and guilty, you need to tackle how you take care of

yourself. Food does not make the problems go away.

Regular binge eating means you have a problem that is out of control and you need to take back control. Remember: You control your mind; it does not control you. You can control how you think about food.

Kathy was often bullied at school and came home and ate large amounts of chocolate, crisps, ice-cream and soda to comfort herself.

It is normal to come home from school and have a snack but Kathy ate a pile of treats until she felt unwell and cross with herself. Eventually she felt able to talk to her aunty about the bullying of a group of school friends and she soon realized that these school friends did not even know how to behave nicely toward one another and stopped being upset by their poor behavior. Her aunty encouraged her to make a new circle of friends and this solved the problem. Kathy now goes home after school and has a small healthy snack. She no longer feels the need to binge eat.

Regular binge eating is a sign that something is causing you unhappiness. It is important to realize that you are using binge eating to cope with a problem. It may be unhappiness or bullying, or even stress at work. You are using this way of eating to comfort yourself.

There are other ways of coping with problems and there is no problem on this earth that has not been experienced before by someone else. You are not alone and one of the best ways to sort out a problem is to talk to a trusted friend or relative, or even your doctor. Most people feel honored when friends and family share problems with them and ask for advice: I know I do. If you really cannot share your problem, then

write it down and then write down possible solutions, and discuss with yourself.

A Healthy Recipe

Ingredients

500g	frozen or fresh mixed berries
100g	butter
100g	caster sugar
75g	self-raising flour
25g	ground almonds
2	eggs
15g	flaked almonds (to finish)

Method

Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas Mark 4

Cream the butter and sugar until fluffy

Beat in eggs, one at a time

Gently fold in the flour and ground almonds

Place the berries in an ovenproof dish and lightly sprinkle with sugar to taste

Cover the berries with the cake mixture and scatter with flaked almonds

Bake in the oven for about 40 minutes until golden brown and cooked in the center

Serve with low-fat ice cream

I call it **“My Eve’s Pudding”**

Tips to Prevent High Blood Pressure

Take effective steps to prevent high blood pressure by: **Losing weight if you need to, exercising regularly, eating a healthy diet, reducing and managing stress, quitting smoking and cutting down on salt and caffeine.**

All these changes will improve your health long term.

وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا

وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ